

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

AMENDED MEETING MINUTES

November 19, 2012

TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM L101

- I. Call to Order –the meeting was called to order at 5:33 PM by Chairperson McBride.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Scott McBride, Chairperson; Myra Cohen; Sharon Braverman; Pam Raynock; and Bill DeBlasio. Others present: Members of the public; Stephen Woods, Mayor; John Salomone, Town Manager; William Collins, Ph.D, Superintendent of Schools; Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance and Operations Officer; Robert Korpak, Director of Facilities Management; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation – None.
- IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2012 meeting. Second by Mrs. Raynock. The motion passed unanimously.
- V. Further Consideration of Potential Community Center sites – Presented by Mr. Salomone, who displayed the options using the overhead visual aids from his tablet. He showed each site and briefly identified some of the favorable and unfavorable elements of each. No action taken. Mrs. Cohen asked if there were times when access between the Community Center and the Senior and Disabled Center is needed. This will be discussed at the next meeting when it is anticipated that the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation will be present. The Committee members felt they could eliminate certain sites, such a those that would keep the Mortensen Community Center in it current location, but that they would wait until the next meeting when new members to the Committee can be present. Mrs Braverman asked if houses on Willard Avenue would be affected by Scheme I 3. Mr. Salomone responded they would not. Mrs. Cohen asked if there was a preference based on cost. Mr. Salomone responded that if the square footage is the same, the cost to build at each location should be pretty much the same.
- VI. Further Consideration of Committee Organizational Concept – Mr. Salomone stated that although he was not present at the previous meeting

for Mr. Olsen's explanation, the Committee will incorporate some of the items into the process. The Project Building Committee doesn't need to formalize this. Parks and Recreation and the Board of Education are present at the table. Preliminary discussions were held with the departments three years ago for a preliminary space needs plan. Things have changed since then. The atrium concept could change things even more. Until the building team is in place, departments don't have anyone to talk to. The Committee needs to hire the Construction Manager and the Project Architect first. At the present time there is no one to coordinate the information. The Town has good baseline data. There will be a fresh look at the space needs when the team is in place. Mrs. Cohen made a motion that the Committee organizational concept presented by Mr. Olsen be eliminated. There was no second to the motion and no vote was taken. The organizational concept presented was never approved. Mr. Salomone noted that there has been no discussion of the former Town Council chambers and that this will be a policy question for the Project Building Committee. Chairperson McBride stated that the first hurdle is how to proceed with the Parks and Recreation building, then the Committee can proceed with the Town Hall.

- VII. Status of Construction Manager Request for Proposals – The Committee approved a rough draft at their previous meeting. A more formal draft has now been completed by staff and was presented by Mr. Salomone. The legal advertisement will be placed in the paper for November 27th and responses will be due on December 13th. The Committee can then short list respondents at their December 17th meeting and schedule interviews. Mrs. Braverman asked if grants were available. Mr. Salomone said that there was not a lot in recreation or from the State of Connecticut. There might be some energy efficiency money, and the Town will be looking at that alternative. Mrs. Cohen asked what the square footage of the Mortensen Community Center was, what sized lot Parks and Recreation would be looking at for parking, etc., and how the project budget will be split. Mr. Salomone responded that the construction manager will have input on that as part of the design process.
- VIII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee– The next meeting will be on Monday, December 3rd, at 5:30 PM in the same room.
- IX. Public Participation – Madey Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive. The Committee's time energy and effort in the process is truly appreciated. She heard that the architect would get the needs and wants of the departments through Mr. Salomone; why not directly from them, then it will be a team effort. More information needs to be available from departments for their five-to-ten year needs. When the Town goes to referendum and votes on a certain amount of money, will there be a breakdown as to the proportions? Where will the extra money for cost

overruns come from? On Scheme I 3, there is only one entrance/exit to/from the parking lot. The Committee should consider a second means of exiting from the parking lot.

Bob Seiler, Flagler Street. He is speaking as the Chairperson of the Board of Fire Commissioners. They were originally told that the Mill Street closure off of Cedar Street was a temporary closure. The closure is still there. This limits fire apparatus access to the library and to Town Hall. This needs to be addressed in the reconfiguration. There is only one entrance to the Community Center location in Scheme I 3. Some circumstance will occur where a public safety vehicle won't be able to get in. These are very important things that have to be addressed.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive. People are still trying to turn in to Mazzocoli Way; signage could be improved. The Committee has discussed the Schemes for three meetings. It has been stated that the bus garage location is not an option and that there will be a separate Mortensen Community Center. If that is the case, why are those options still on the table? Don't airbrush out the bus garage. The library representatives will have to come together with the Committee and discuss their needs and intentions more. If the Mortensen Community Center stays in the Town Hall, is there enough room for the other departments? Is the master plan just for Parks and Recreation or for Town Hall? The setup of this room has screens facing in different directions. There should be a way for the public to sit and look without twisting. Mr. Salomone responded that the initiative to put the flat screens in the room was to allow people to see what was going on. He did not want a traffic study for Mazzocoli Way, this will be addressed by the architect. Mr. McBride noted that the Committee has talked about a lot of things. There has been confusion about logistics. There is a need to keep the project clear. What is on the wall in this room is not relevant to this Project Building Committee. For a lot of what the Committee is discussing, the Committee needs to keep its eyes on their immediate task. Right now, it is the Parks and Recreation building. The Committee needs to filter what is relevant. Not everything discussed here is relevant. Having Mr. DeBlasio here is a positive thing. He wants the new members to hit the ground running. Mr. Salomone stated that he could give a tutorial to the new members on the various schemes so the Committee wouldn't have to go over them again. Mrs. Cohen stated that for the Police and Board of Education projects, the chairpersons of the building committees knew what was to be allocated. What goes before the public is what they are voting on, not just a vague number.

Don Woods, 82 Ivy Lane. Regarding the use of the soccer field in Scheme I 3, it is used by youth soccer in the spring and throughout the season. If relocating the pool and the bathhouse moves forward soccer could be accommodated. Both Mill Pond Park pool and Churchill Park pool are

over 40 years old. He encourages the Committee to consider including the pool along with the building. He also feels that the two new members from the Board of Parks and Recreation are good additions to the Committee.

Sandy Lallier, 27 Elton Drive. This is her first meeting. She has been waiting for the Town Hall improvements for a long time. Will Parks and Recreation have a separate building? She hasn't heard anything tonight as to why they can't stay together. What is the cost of replacement? She envisions taking out the old and re-building. A new building would be lovely but the Committee needs to consider things such as utilities. She prefers to keep Parks intact as they are. She feels you can modernize cheaper than building new. There would be more uniform Town services if they were all in one spot. On the pool issue, there are some utilities at Churchill Park, could the Mortensen Community Center go there? You could have a modern building connected to Town Hall for the Parks and Recreation Department. Dr. Collins noted that the Board of Education has offices spread throughout the district. It would be nice to have everyone in the same building.

- X. Committee response to public participation – Mrs. Raynock stated that the cost of renovating the Town Hall with the Mortensen Community Center included and the cost of moving the Mortensen Community Center out was not a considerable difference. The Committee didn't feel it could lose the gym for an extended period of time. Mr. DeBlasio noted that the department would need to relocate 500 programs and a whole section of the building while the gym and present community center were off line. Mrs. Raynock wants to go forward with seeing what it would cost to move the Mortensen Community Center to another site. If the numbers come back and it is a big difference, then she would want to reconsider. Mr. McBride stated that the Committee is striving for an estimate for a separate building and for a building that is still attached. These are loose figures only at this time. The Committee needs to get over the hurdle of the Parks and Recreation question first.
- XI. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services